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Report of the Security Council mission to Addis Ababa, Khartoum, Accra, Abidjan and Kinshasa, 14 to 21 June 2007

I. Introduction

1. The present report of the Security Council mission to Africa from 14 to 21 June 2007 has three stand-alone sections covering the Security Council's visits to Addis Ababa, Khartoum and Accra, Abidjan and Kinshasa, respectively. Each section ends with specific recommendations to the Security Council. The present report follows the briefing to the Council by the heads of the Security Council mission to Africa on 26 June 2007 (see S/PV.5706).

2. In his letter dated 11 June 2007 (S/2007/347), the President of the Security Council informed the Secretary-General that the members of the Security Council had decided to send a mission to Addis Ababa, Khartoum, Accra, Abidjan and Kinshasa from 14 to 21 June 2007. Its terms of reference and composition are set out in annex I to the present report. The mission was led jointly by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, Sir Emyr Jones Parry, and the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations, Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo. The mission left New York on 14 June 2007. It visited the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, and Khartoum and Accra.

II. Addis Ababa, Khartoum and Accra

3. During its visit to the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa, the mission met with the Chairperson, Alpha Oumar Konaré, and other members of the African Union Commission (including the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Said Djinnit), as well as the African Union Peace and Security Council.

4. In Khartoum, the mission met with the President of the Sudan, Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir; the Senior Assistant to the President, Minni Arkou Minnawi; the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lam Akol; the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations, Ambassador Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem Mohamad: the Governors of the three Darfur States, other senior members of the Government of National Unity; and the leadership of the United Nations Mission in the Sudan. The

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Council was accompanied in its meetings in Khartoum by the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, Taye Brook Zerihoun.

5. In Accra, the mission met with the President of Ghana and Chairperson of the African Union, John A. Kufuor, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Nana Akufo-Addo.

A. Background and context

6. The Security Council visited Addis Ababa and Accra in order to exchange views with the leadership of the African Union and the African Union Commission on ways of optimizing the relationship between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union, as well as other regional organizations, in the maintenance of peace and security in Africa. It also sought to discuss mechanisms for building closer ties between the United Nations and the African Union Commission in the fields of conflict prevention, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding and means of supporting and improving the resource base and capacity of the peace and security architecture of the African Union.

7. The mission wished to discuss with African Union officials the situations in the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan, and the Great Lakes region (Lord's Resistance Army). It was also briefed by the African Union on the situation in the Comoros.

8. The Security Council visited Khartoum at the invitation of the Government of the Sudan, as expressed in the letter dated 16 May 2007, addressed to the President of the Security Council by the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations. The purpose of the visit was to reaffirm the Council's commitment to the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Sudan, and to reaffirm the determination of the international community to help the Sudan achieve peace and development. The Council wished to review the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement governing the north-south peace process. It also wished to encourage all parties to respect the Darfur ceasefire agreement fully, and to engage constructively in the peace process and forthcoming talks to be convened by the United Nations and African Union special envoys for Darfur.

9. The Council's visit to Addis Ababa, Khartoum and Accra took place at a time when the African Union and the United Nations were finalizing plans to embark on an unprecedented partnership in Darfur. This partnership entails joint mediation to take forward the political process and the deployment of a hybrid United Nations-African Union peacekeeping operation in accordance with agreements reached at the high-level meeting on Darfur held in Addis Ababa on 16 November 2006 and endorsed in the communiqué of 30 November 2006 of the African Union Peace and Security Council and the statement of 19 December 2006 of the President of the Security Council (S/PRST/2006/55). The visit followed the acceptance on 12 June 2007 by the Government of the Sudan of African Union-United Nations plans for the hybrid operation in Darfur as contained in the report of the Secretary-General of 5 June 2007 (S/2007/307/Rev.1).

B. Details

1. African Union-United Nations cooperation in the maintenance of peace and security

10. In its meetings with African Union officials, the mission noted that a critical element of United Nations relations with the African Union was cooperation between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council to achieve the shared objective of peace and security in Africa. It recalled, in this regard, the 2005 World Summit Outcome and Security Council resolution 1625 (2005), in which the need was recognized to enhance the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in the prevention and settlement of conflicts. The mission wished to review the status of and future priorities for strengthening African Union-United Nations cooperation in the areas of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, including with respect to the African Standby Force.

11. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, President Konaré, thanked the Security Council for its continued engagement with the African Union on African issues. As the relationship between the two organizations continued to evolve, he envisioned a more coherent partnership in which efforts to maintain peace and security avoided duplication. Achieving this coherence would require innovative arrangements, shared strategic analysis and the harmonization of decision-making procedures. It would also require the development of a rapid intervention force for immediate regional responses to African conflicts. The Chairperson urged the Security Council to recognize African efforts towards regional integration and, in this regard, to harmonize the efforts of United Nations representation in Africa.

12. In his capacity as the Chairperson of the African Union, President Kufuor described the visit to Africa by the Security Council as a symbol of the cooperation that existed between the African Union and the Security Council. To further strengthen the relationship, President Kufuor urged the Security Council to view the African Union Peace and Security Council as an extension of the Security Council. He requested the Security Council to help in strengthening the African Union, to respond efficiently on behalf of the Security Council to conflicts in the continent. To that end, President Kufuor reaffirmed the need for a more structured and formalized relationship between the two bodies, characterized by partnership and mutual respect.

13. With regard to the 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union, the mission was informed in Addis Ababa that operationalizing the African peace and security architecture was a high priority and an area in which progress was being made. Nonetheless, making it an operational reality was a massive task, requiring the international community to play an active part, particularly in the development of the African Standby Force. Through its deployment of peacekeeping forces in Burundi, Darfur and Somalia, the African Union demonstrated a comparative advantage relative to the United Nations, although the funding, deployment and sustainability of the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) illustrated the challenges involved in developing long-term African Union peacekeeping capacity. Notwithstanding ongoing capacity-building initiatives, including the welcome

establishment of a United Nations team to support the development of the African Standby Force, a major obstacle to a sustainable approach remained the lack of predictable funding. Reliance on voluntary donor funding inhibited long-term planning and deterred potential troop contributors.

14. In its meeting with the Peace and Security Council, the mission recognized the need to strengthen cooperation between the two Councils and expressed its hope that annual joint meetings would also lead to enhanced cooperation between the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission. Members of the Peace and Security Council reaffirmed the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security and called on the Security Council to recognize that activities of the African Union Peace and Security Council undertaken under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations were carried out on behalf of the international community. Further to that principle, the Peace and Security Council also urged the Security Council to consider the possibility of financing African Union peace support missions from assessed contributions, as requested in the decision of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (Assembly/AU/Dec.145(VIII)). Finally, the Peace and Security Council expressed the need for the two Councils to harmonize decision-making with regard to peace and security in Africa.

15. The mission recognized the need to develop mechanisms for the United Nations and the African Union to share best practices and strategic analysis. It also stressed the need for regular information from the African Union regarding its peacekeeping activities endorsed or authorized by the Security Council.

16. In a joint communiqué adopted on 16 June (see annex II), the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council committed themselves to the development of a stronger and more structured relationship as well as to sharing information on conflict situations on the agendas of the two bodies. They also expressed support for the strengthening of the capacity of the African Union Commission in areas such as planning and logistics, and in particular the establishment of a well-resourced peacekeeping capability. They agreed to consider, on the basis of the forthcoming report of the Secretary-General, the modalities for supporting and improving in a sustained way the resource base and capacity of the African Union, and to examine the possibility of the financing of a peacekeeping operation undertaken by the African Union. The two bodies further concluded that yearly meetings between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council would be held in Addis Ababa or New York, and expressed support for closer cooperation and sharing of experiences on working methods between the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission. Finally, the two bodies encouraged close consultations between the African Union and the United Nations Security Council as decisions were being prepared on issues affecting peace and security in Africa.

17. In Accra, President Kufuor welcomed the joint communiqué and stressed the need to rise beyond promises and follow through with action. For its part, the African Union was committed to playing its role to achieve peace and development in the continent.

2. Sudan/Darfur and the regional situation

Consultations in Addis Ababa

18. Prior to its arrival in Khartoum, the mission discussed the situation in the Sudan and the region with African Union officials. In the discussions, the mission reaffirmed its commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Sudan, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, and the pursuit of a comprehensive settlement of the crisis in Darfur. The latter would require continued humanitarian assistance, a sustained and viable political process, and enhanced security in the region, in accordance with the agreements reached in Addis Ababa and Abuja in November 2006. The mission and African Union officials reviewed ongoing preparations for renewed political negotiations in Darfur led by the African Union and United Nations special envoys. Further to the acceptance by the Government of the Sudan on 12 June 2007 of African Union-United Nations plans for a hybrid peacekeeping operation in Darfur, the mission and African Union officials discussed specific measures for the implementation of those plans, including the readiness of African troop-contributing countries to provide troops to the hybrid operation.

19. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission said that the situation in Darfur was unacceptable, and highlighted its implications for peace and security in the region. He emphasized that the African Union attached great importance to the sovereignty of a democratic Sudan and argued that the deterioration of relations between Chad and the Sudan following the signing in May 2006 in Abuja of the Darfur Peace Agreement was a major reason why the Abuja Agreement had not been implemented. New negotiations were necessary. While the need for a ceasefire was urgent, as long as the causes of the conflict remained unaddressed there was a danger that the fighting could resume. According to the African Union Peace and Security Council, a critical incentive for the non-signatories of the Darfur Peace Agreement to join the peace process was evidence of serious commitment on the part of the international community to facilitate a comprehensive peace settlement and to support its implementation with a clear timeline and road map. African Union officials underlined the need to encourage both the Government and rebels to engage in the African Union/United Nations-led political process within the timelines set out in the road map developed by the special envoys.

20. With regard to peacekeeping in Darfur, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission stressed the urgent need to address the ongoing financial crisis of AMIS, which had caused lengthy delays in paying troops. He confirmed his understanding that the acceptance by the Government of the Sudan of the hybrid operation was unconditional. He urged the Security Council to adopt a resolution authorizing the operation and recommending United Nations funding. In his view, assured funding would generate sufficient numbers of African troops to maintain the African character of the operation. Meanwhile, according to the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security, the extension of the mandate of AMIS beyond 30 June 2007 required the guarantee of resources for the continuation of AMIS operations. The full implementation of the United Nations light and heavy support package for AMIS and the deployment of two additional AMIS battalions were a necessary foundation for the establishment of the hybrid operation.

21. The mission stressed that the Security Council could recommend United Nations funding for the hybrid operation only if there was full accountability and transparency in the management of resources, and United Nations involvement in

command and control. African Union Commission officials confirmed that the command arrangements being developed by the African Union and the United Nations provided maximum flexibility and would rely on the peacekeeping experience of the United Nations.

22. While recognizing that African Union-United Nations cooperation should be based on an equal partnership, the mission emphasized the need for the United Nations to remain the centre for harmonizing approaches to conflict resolution, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, which guides cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

Meetings in Khartoum

23. In Khartoum, the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General stressed to the mission how much more work there was to be done to implement the hybrid peacekeeping operation and bring security to the people of Darfur. Although security had improved since the Security Council visit in June 2006, further progress on the peace process was critical, as was the full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

24. During separate meetings with the President of the Sudan and the Foreign Minister, the mission discussed both the situation in Darfur and the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The Foreign Minister affirmed the unequivocal commitment of his Government to the Addis Ababa framework for achieving a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Darfur, and said he hoped for continued dialogue and consultations with the international community in the spirit of the Addis Ababa meeting. The President and the Foreign Minister both confirmed their full acceptance of the hybrid United Nations-African Union operation.

25. The mission reaffirmed the determination of the Security Council to seek an end to the killing of innocent parties in Darfur, to play its part in efforts to end the violence by all parties, and to help ensure adequate protection for civilians. To this end, the mission further called on all parties to work for peace in Darfur and to implement the Addis Ababa conclusions expeditiously. It welcomed the Government's acceptance of the hybrid operation. The operation would be predominantly African in character, though non-African personnel and assets would also be required. Unity of command would be preserved, and command and control arrangements would be in accordance with United Nations processes. The operation would be as outlined in the African Union-United Nations plans for the hybrid operation in Darfur contained in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/307/Rev.1), and would be mandated by the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council. On the basis of those understandings, the mission confirmed that the Security Council would authorize the hybrid operation and recommend funding from the United Nations assessed budget.

26. The mission made the following additional points: restraint was needed, the ceasefire should be respected and humanitarian access should be improved; the meeting on 25 June in Paris would focus on funding for AMIS, as well as on the transition from humanitarian assistance to development; the political process must be reinvigorated, with fuller engagement by all parties; progress in disarming the Janjaweed was essential; a status-of-forces agreement similar to the status-of-forces agreement for the United Nations Mission in the Sudan should be applied to Darfur so that the deployment of United Nations personnel in the Sudan would be governed

by a common legal regime; and bureaucratic impediments in, for example, Customs, should be minimized. Responding to the various briefs presented by the Government, several members of the mission stated that information provided by non-governmental organizations on the ground suggested different conditions from those described in the briefs. The members of the mission also inquired about the Government position on prosecutions by the International Criminal Court.

27. In the initial briefings and in reply to points made by the mission, the President, the Foreign Minister and other Sudanese officials stated that living conditions in Darfur were better than in many other parts of the Sudan and the activities of non-signatories of the Darfur Peace Agreement were the main source of insecurity and humanitarian suffering; that there were no security problems in the areas where Sudanese Armed Forces or Sudanese Government Police were deployed; that most roads in Darfur were secure and humanitarian access through those roads was unhindered; that the mechanisms for coordinating humanitarian activities were succeeding; and that disarmament of the Janjaweed was progressing. The Government also stated that the Sudan was not a signatory of the Rome Statute that established the International Criminal Court. The President and other Sudanese Government officials expressed their dissatisfaction at the activities of rebel groups that they said had undermined the peace and stability of Darfur, underlined the right of the Government of the Sudan to maintain security in the Sudan, and called on the Security Council to exert pressure on the rebel groups and to recommend to the General Assembly funding of the hybrid operation from the United Nations budget.

28. The mission and its Sudanese interlocutors agreed on the importance of using the momentum generated by the Council's visit to Khartoum to accelerate progress on the peace process, peacekeeping and the humanitarian front. The mission made clear the wish of the Security Council that the political track be accelerated. The Government confirmed its commitment to pursue that track aggressively in accordance with the Tripoli consensus, which called for the convergence of all regional initiatives into the process led by the African Union and the United Nations. At the same time, the Council would request the preparation of joint African Union-United Nations timelines for the deployment of the hybrid operation in Darfur and would work to prepare the mandate authorization for the hybrid operation.

29. All of the mission's interlocutors emphasized the importance of addressing the regional dimensions of the crisis in Darfur. With regard to the Sudan-Chad border, the mission referred to the state of bilateral relations and the necessity of a ceasefire, as well as the need to ensure the security of the displaced. The mission noted that the Security Council was working with the Secretary-General to develop plans for the protection of refugee camps. In Addis Ababa, the African Union Peace and Security Council informed the mission that a report from its recent visit to Chad concerning implementation of the Tripoli Agreement between Chad and the Sudan was to be presented in the coming days. The Foreign Minister said the Government of the Sudan hoped progress towards the normalization of relations would be achieved during the visit of the President of Chad, Idriss Déby, to Khartoum, planned for 25 June.

30. On the north-south peace process, the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General informed the mission that critical milestones were approaching in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. These included the

beginning of the registration process for elections (postponed until February 2008) and the redeployment of armed forces to either side of the boundary of 1 January 1956 (the deadline for which was 9 July 2007). In the absence of an agreement on the demarcation of the boundary, however, both of these processes were at risk.

31. The Sudanese Government interlocutors, including the State Minister at the Presidency, Tilar Deng, informed the mission of progress that had been made in implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, including the formation of the Government of National Unity, the Government of Southern Sudan, and legislative assemblies in Khartoum and in the south. He stated that failure to demarcate the north-south boundary was impeding progress in other areas, such as the sharing of oil revenues, the status of Abyei, the redeployment of military forces and the integration or dismantlement of other armed groups. The mission was told by the Government that the Abyei issue was close to resolution. The President argued that sanctions undermined the prospects for the unity of the country, as they hindered the ability of the Government to provide development and basic services to the south. Accordingly, the President said it was time for the sanctions to be lifted and for development work in the Sudan to start, including work to benefit the citizens of Southern Sudan.

32. The mission reaffirmed its respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Sudan and its support for the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, as well as its hope that the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement would strengthen the unity of the country.

Meetings in Accra

33. After its visit to the Sudan, the mission briefed President Kufuor on the outcome of its meeting with President Al-Bashir, and requested President Kufuor, in his capacity as the Chairperson of the African Union, to facilitate the implementation of the hybrid operation, to achieve a durable ceasefire, and to address the dire humanitarian situation. The African Union Chairperson noted that the agreement by the Government of the Sudan to implement without preconditions the Addis Ababa framework demonstrated a new chapter in resolving the conflict in Darfur. He further noted that the hybrid operation clearly highlighted the renewed partnership and the need for the United Nations to assist the African Union in developing its capacities to meet certain responsibilities in terms of regional peace and security.

3. Somalia

34. The mission discussed the situation in Somalia with African Union officials. International involvement in Somalia represented another test case, in addition to the challenges of working together on Darfur, for collaboration and cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. The African Union Peace and Security Council said it had authorized the deployment of AMISOM to support efforts by the Transitional Federal Government to stabilize the country, to assist dialogue and reconciliation, and to support development. The deployment had been authorized on the understanding that the United Nations would take over in six months as it had done in Burundi and in view of the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. The mission was informed that the African Union had deployed two battalions since

5 March 2007 and that additional deployments faced significant logistical challenges.

35. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission emphasized the need for increased African Union and United Nations political presences on the ground. The Peace and Security Council informed the mission that the African Union envoy for Somalia was being relocated from Nairobi to Mogadishu in order to facilitate a more active and inclusive political process.

36. The African Union Peace and Security Council urged the international community to support the National Reconciliation Congress and the Chairperson of the National Governance and Reconciliation Committee, Ali Mahdi, and also to support the increase in humanitarian assistance in Mogadishu. The Peace and Security Council also urged the United Nations Security Council to play an active role to assist the political process in Somalia. Ultimately, however, future peace and stability in Somalia would require strengthening the fragile Government structures in the country.

37. The mission expressed its wish that the current window of opportunity for national reconciliation should not be lost. The mission noted, in this regard, the importance of beginning the National Reconciliation Congress on 15 July. Progress towards the full deployment and strengthening of AMISOM was crucial in preventing extremists from delaying the National Reconciliation Congress. Security for the National Reconciliation Congress was identified as a particularly significant challenge. The mission said that the United Nations was following the current reconciliation process attentively, with a view to the possible transition of AMISOM to a United Nations operation, for which the Secretary-General was preparing contingency plans.

38. To resolve the conflict in Somalia, President Kufuor stressed the need to adopt a two-track approach: to address the political crisis while achieving peacekeeping. The Chairperson of the African Union stressed the need for the Transitional Federal Government to be transparent and inclusive to ensure a successful National Reconciliation Congress that would lay the foundation for a ceasefire and a political settlement. At the same time, he called on the United Nations to help mobilize sufficient resources to enable AMISOM to carry out the peacekeeping operation in Somalia effectively.

C. Regional considerations

39. One member, on behalf of the mission, informed the African Union Peace and Security Council of its work on the Ethiopia-Eritrea boundary issue. The mission stated that resolution 1741 (2007) reiterated the obligations of the parties to implement the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission and to enable the Commission to demarcate the border.

40. One member, on behalf of the mission, noted that the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) from northern Uganda represented one of the most significant challenges to peace in Africa and was a priority for the Security Council. The mission urged the expeditious conclusion of the peace talks between the Government of Uganda and LRA, which had restarted on 1 June 2007 in Juba, and hoped they would lead to an effective cessation of hostilities and a comprehensive political solution, including an

end to impunity. The mission commended the Governments of Uganda and Southern Sudan for their efforts to find a long-term solution to the LRA challenge and expressed its full confidence in the mediation of the Juba Talks by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Joachim Chissano. Already, the mission noted, 400,000 displaced people had returned to their homes and 400,000 more were on their way home.

41. The African Union Peace and Security Council informed the mission of the situation in the Comoros, in particular the unrest related to the election held on 10 June and the challenges facing the African Union Mission for Support to the Elections in the Comoros. The Peace and Security Council expressed its hope that the forthcoming meeting on the situation convened by South Africa on 19 June would develop specific recommendations and pave the way for a solution.

D. Recommendations to the Security Council

42. Taking into account the views expressed by the Council's interlocutors and conclusions drawn from the various exchanges, the mission hereby recommends:

(a) That the Security Council consider how best to take forward the action points set out in the joint communiqué agreed with the African Union Peace and Security Council in order to develop a strong and more structured relationship between the two bodies, and between the United Nations and the African Union more generally on issues of peace and security in Africa;

(b) That the Security Council, in the spirit of improving cooperation with the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa, look forward to an update on the African Union summit in Accra;

(c) That the Security Council consider, on the basis of the forthcoming report of the Secretary-General, the modalities for supporting and improving in a sustained way the resource base and capacity of the African Union, and examine the possibility of financing a peacekeeping operation undertaken by the African Union;

(d) That the Security Council seek to authorize as soon as possible the deployment of the hybrid United Nations-African Union peacekeeping operation to Darfur;

(e) That the Security Council request the Secretary-General to seek approval from the General Assembly for United Nations funding, as appropriate, for the hybrid United Nations-African Union peacekeeping operation to Darfur;

(f) That the Security Council continue to urge the parties in Darfur to respect the ceasefire and their international obligations, to ensure full humanitarian access, and to engage constructively in the Darfur peace process, including giving consideration to whether the Security Council could apply more pressure on the rebels in Darfur to participate in the peace process;

(g) That the Security Council continue to support the full deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia and encourage the Secretary-General to undertake appropriate contingency planning for a possible United Nations mission, to be deployed in Somalia should the Security Council decide to authorize such a mission.

III. Côte d'Ivoire

A. Background and context

43. Prior to its visit to Abidjan on 19 June, the mission discussed the situation in Côte d'Ivoire with African Union officials in Addis Ababa. In these discussions, the mission expressed its gratitude to the President of Burkina Faso for facilitating the Ouagadougou Agreement, an important achievement which contained an ambitious framework for political transition in Côte d'Ivoire. The specific objectives of the Agreement included the creation of institutions, disarmament and demobilization of combatants, the reform of the military and police, outreach to other political parties, as well as identification and elections. As requested by the parties to the Agreement, United Nations/United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) support for its implementation was under way.

44. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission commended the work of South Africa and the United Nations in Côte d'Ivoire, as well as the current involvement of Burkina Faso in the process, and recommended that the follow-up to the Ouagadougou Agreement should respect the ownership of the process by the parties rather than imposing solutions that they would not adhere to. He thought it was important for the international community to trust the Ivorian people to develop the future legislative framework for the country with help from the mediation.

45. The African Union Peace and Security Council said that United Nations regional cooperation in Côte d'Ivoire constituted an inspiring model for the future. The African Union saw the demobilization of militias, the appointment of magistrates, and the holding of elections as crucial priorities in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement, all of which required significant United Nations support. The Peace and Security Council called on the international community to continue to support the direct engagement between the two parties facilitated by the President of Burkina Faso.

46. In Accra, the President of Ghana, John A. Kufuor, requested the United Nations Security Council specifically to support the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire and called on the United Nations to play a significant role in the election process in the country, including through the certification of elections. The Minister for Foreign Affairs informed the Council that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has welcomed and supported a proposal by the Facilitator to establish an international follow-up mechanism that would replace the International Working Group on Côte d'Ivoire. The proposal would be transmitted in due course, through appropriate channels, for the consideration and endorsement of both the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council.

47. In Abidjan, the mission, led by the Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations, Ambassador Jorge Voto-Bernales, met with the President, Laurent Gbagbo, and with the Prime Minister, Guillaume Soro. Members of the Government, including the Minister of Defence, Amani N'Guessan, the Minister of the Interior, Tagro Désiré, and the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations, Ambassador Alcide Djédjé, participated in the meeting between the mission and the President.

48. The mission also met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, Djibril Bassolé, in his capacity as representative of the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, who is the current Chairman of the Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS and Facilitator of the Ivorian direct political dialogue. The mission was also briefed by the senior leadership of ONUCI and the commander of the French forces which support it.

B. Details

49. The mission's visit to Côte d'Ivoire took place shortly after the signing of a peace agreement by President Gbagbo and the Secretary-General of the Forces nouvelles, Guillaume Soro, in Ouagadougou on 4 March, under the facilitation of President Compaoré. The Ouagadougou Agreement resulted from direct dialogue between President Gbagbo's Government and the Forces nouvelles.

50. In concluding the Ouagadougou Agreement, the former belligerents strove to identify practical solutions to address the root causes of the Ivorian conflict, including the issue of identification of the population; the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants; the dismantling of armed militias; the removal of the zone of confidence; and the restoration of State authority, including the redeployment of Government administration nationwide, in order to organize and hold national elections. The parties also agreed on a power-sharing formula allowing for the appointment of Guillaume Soro as Prime Minister and the installation of a new Government on 17 April.

51. The mission's interlocutors noted that the Ouagadougou Agreement constituted a balanced compromise that was acceptable to both sides and drew useful lessons from the previously agreed Linas-Marcoussis, Accra and Pretoria agreements. Its originality lay in the fact that it had been the outcome of the will of the two main parties to the conflict. The Agreement also established a framework that should allow for the resolution of issues that had previously prevented progress in the peace process.

52. The mission underlined the support of the Security Council for the Ouagadougou Agreement, which it was felt indicated ownership of the peace process by the Ivorian parties. The mission stressed the importance of a final and durable settlement of the crisis and urged its Ivorian interlocutors to ensure the full implementation of the Agreement, in particular, meeting the benchmarks leading to the organization of free, open, fair and transparent elections. The mission reaffirmed its strong commitment to ensuring the credibility of the Ivorian electoral process. The positive role and commitment of the parties would be essential in that regard. The mission also reaffirmed the commitment of the United Nations to continue assisting the Ivorian people with the implementation of the peace process. In addition, the mission expressed its serious concern at the persistence of the humanitarian and socio-economic crises in Côte d'Ivoire, including the grave human rights situation and its dire humanitarian consequences, causing large-scale civilian suffering and displacement. The mission stressed the need for efforts to be made in the humanitarian, socio-economic and human rights fields, particularly in ending impunity.

C. Political and security climate

53. Both the President and the Prime Minister indicated that the political climate had significantly improved over the last months. In the President's view the "war was over". The Prime Minister noted that his relationship with the President was "good". He added that the current institutional architecture was conducive to ensuring progress on key issues of the peace process, including identification. The President and Prime Minister had established an informal framework for regular consultation and dialogue on sensitive issues. Steps had also been taken towards ensuring the buy-in of the political parties that had not been directly involved in negotiating the Ouagadougou Agreement but were, nonetheless, represented in the Government led by Prime Minister Soro. The Prime Minister had secured the agreement of the Government to a "consensual" road map for the implementation of the Agreement.

54. Furthermore, the symbolic meeting of a delegation of "Young Patriots" with the Forces nouvelles representatives in Bouaké had been a positive initiative in defusing tensions. It was, however, acknowledged that the full restoration of confidence between the two main Ivorian parties would depend on the preparation and conduct of the electoral process, which should be credible and transparent.

55. On the security front, the leaders of the impartial forces noted that no fighting had taken place since the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement. It was generally felt that a resumption of hostilities at the current stage of the peace process was "highly improbable". The security situation throughout the country, however, remained precarious owing to the persistence of frequent criminal incidents. The mission was also informed that illegal roadblocks remained in place, including in Abidjan. In this connection, the mission noted that the request for a partial lifting of the arms embargo regime was meant to allow the Government to purchase law enforcement equipment for the police and gendarmerie. Several members of the mission expressed doubts about a partial lifting of the embargo, as disarmament and reforming the security sector were still pending. Some courses of action were outlined to bring these contradictory concerns into convergence. The mission also noted that the Government was establishing a number of mixed gendarmerie brigades, which would be deployed to patrol the Green Line. The establishment of those mixed units, which were essential in building confidence between the parties, had been delayed, mostly for lack of funding and technical capacity, including in operationalizing the Integrated Command Centre.

56. Meanwhile, the Government had organized symbolic weapons decommissioning ceremonies to mark the formal launch of the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration process and dismantling of militias. President Gbagbo informed the mission of his intention to preside over a weapons decommissioning ceremony in Bouaké on 5 July. The President and the Prime Minister both called for international support, including financial assistance, for the Government's initiative to establish a "civic service" for demobilized youths. The programme would provide former combatants and militia members with employment training, as well as financial support to establish small businesses. President Gbagbo noted that in his view the Ivorian crisis was essentially the result of an economic crisis characterized by high levels of youth unemployment.

D. Status of implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement and follow-up

57. The mission noted that immediately following the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement the parties had made rapid progress in its implementation. Steps taken included the appointment of Guillaume Soro as Prime Minister on 29 March; the establishment of an inclusive Government on 7 April; and the commencement of the lifting of the zone of confidence on 16 April, as well as the establishment by the Government, with assistance from UNOCI, of an Integrated Command Centre in Yamoussoukro on 16 April.

58. The Government had also made some progress on measures that should allow for the effective extension of State authority throughout the country. On 5 June, President Gbagbo signed decrees appointing magistrates and district administrators (*préfets*). The President also noted that the Minister of the Interior had met recently with the newly appointed *préfets* in Bouaké, the former headquarters of the Forces nouvelles.

59. The mission urged the parties to reach agreement, as soon as possible, on the important outstanding issue of the ranks of the former Forces nouvelles combatants and the quotas of each of the forces to be integrated into a reformed National Army. This was a critical first step in implementing an effective security sector reform programme. Both the President and the Prime Minister acknowledged the importance of their reaching an agreement concerning the issue of military ranks for former combatants and army integration quotas. On 20 June, President Compaoré was convening a meeting to address this issue. The mission encouraged the parties to favour a political solution in addressing this sensitive issue, as the technical approach currently being pursued might lead to a deadlock. The Council's interlocutors expressed cautious optimism that the issue would be resolved in a timely manner, under the guidance of the Facilitator.

60. President Gbagbo outlined the next steps in the implementation of the Agreement. He indicated that the Government would shortly deploy nationwide magistrates and other judicial officials, who would then launch the identification process, which he estimated would get under way by the beginning of July. The identification process would allow for the issuance of birth certificates, as appropriate, to people born in Côte d'Ivoire, including foreigners, who would be required to subsequently obtain the relevant immigration documents. Ivorian nationals would obtain an identity card, as well as an electoral card. The process would also allow for the voters' list established in 2000 to be updated. The identification would commence once the parties had identified and agreed on a private company that would assist the National Statistical Institute in conducting the process. The representative of the Facilitator noted that the Permanent Consultation Framework (one of the follow-up bodies of the Ouagadougou Agreement) recommended complying with the outcome of the tender process that had already taken place. The President noted that a decision regarding the private operator would be taken shortly.

61. The mission expressed concern at delays in the implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement in recent weeks. The mission's interlocutors acknowledged that the pace of implementation of the Agreement had slowed, but they added that the delays were mainly due to technical reasons. Both President

Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro noted that the negotiators of the Agreement had been optimistic in establishing the timelines for its implementation. The Prime Minister noted that he had informed the Facilitator that, in his view, the implementation of the Agreement faced a two-month delay at this stage. While acknowledging the need for rapid progress in implementing the Agreement, in particular the organization and conduct of the elections, the mission's interlocutors noted that some flexibility would be required with regard to the implementation timetable. The Prime Minister stressed that it was important to allow sufficient time for the parties to resolve sensitive outstanding matters through dialogue, including consensual agreements on each step of process. This, he noted, was essential in building confidence between the parties, safeguarding the current peace process and preventing a recurrence of conflict.

62. The mission stressed the need for effective follow-up to the Ouagadougou Agreement. The Foreign Minister of Burkina Faso recalled that the Agreement had established two follow-up bodies: the Permanent Consultation Framework and the Evaluation and Monitoring Committee, which provides a political framework for the parties to resolve sensitive issues. Both President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro welcomed the establishment of the Framework and the Committee, which would be useful in ensuring progress with the implementation of the Agreement. The Facilitator recommended also the establishment of an international follow-up mechanism, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), that would help, in particular, to mobilize international support. The Facilitator would designate a representative in Abidjan to follow up on the peace process.

63. The mission reiterated its call on the Ivorian parties to adhere as closely as possible to the agreed timetable, while safeguarding the integrity of the process. This was essential in preserving the momentum of the Ouagadougou Agreement. The mission reaffirmed the Council's continued support for the peace process and indicated that it was expected that the mandate of UNOCI would be renewed shortly. Both President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro reaffirmed their commitment and determination to fully implementing the Agreement and successfully concluding the peace process through the holding of free, transparent and credible elections.

E. The electoral process and the United Nations role in certifying the elections

64. The mission stressed the importance of ensuring the holding of free, open, equitable and transparent elections in a timely manner. The preparatory process should be credible and each stage should be certified. President Gbagbo concurred with the views of the mission. He stressed the need for certification and called for the United Nations to play a key role in ensuring the credibility of the elections, including the certification of each stage of the electoral process. He also called for the monitoring of the elections by as many electoral observers as possible. The President stressed that presidential elections would be open to all potential candidates. This was important in ensuring the credibility of the process and guaranteeing the long-term stability of the country. The Prime Minister indicated that he did not intend to run for the Presidency. Both the President and the Prime Minister called on the United Nations to maintain their presence in Côte d'Ivoire to accompany the peace process, and stressed that United Nations assistance would be

particularly required in providing logistical, security and technical support for the elections.

65. With regard to the certification process, the Council's interlocutors, including the Foreign Minister of Burkina Faso, reaffirmed the agreement in principle of the signatories of the Ouagadougou Agreement that the tasks of a High Representative for the elections to certify the credibility of the elections should be carried out in the context of the upcoming elections. The Foreign Minister highlighted the fact that the certification process was essential in reassuring all of the Ivorian political actors that the electoral process would remain impartial and credible. He noted that the Facilitator had no objections regarding the proposed fusion of the role of the High Representative for the elections with that of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The Prime Minister encouraged the mission to seek the advice of the Facilitator concerning the appropriate institutional framework regarding the certification of the elections.

66. Several of the Council's interlocutors cautioned that the holding of the elections, currently scheduled for October 2007, might need to be postponed because of the delays in the peace process. All of the Council's interlocutors underlined the importance of ensuring the credibility of the electoral process, which was essential in ensuring the long-term stability and recovery of the country. President Gbagbo added that, with the completion of the electoral process, Côte d'Ivoire would have entered a new phase of governance, which would no longer require a United Nations peacekeeping presence.

F. Socio-economic and humanitarian situation

67. The mission also expressed concern at the continuing humanitarian and socio-economic crises in Côte d'Ivoire, including the grave human rights situation. The Council stressed the need for efforts to be made, particularly in ending impunity. There are still large numbers of internally displaced people throughout the country and the socio-economic situation, particularly in the western and northern areas, remains dire. Both President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Soro agreed that the socio-economic situation required urgent attention.

68. The President said that the conflict had prevented Côte d'Ivoire from being governed effectively throughout the crisis. The Government had tried to ensure the regular payment of civil servants and the delivery of basic services to populations in the area under its control and to address human rights violations. The early holding of credible elections would allow an elected Government to focus on recovery efforts and the longer term socio-economic development of the country. In the meantime, the Government was taking measures to revive the economy and allow for the resumption of international economic assistance, including through World Bank and IMF programmes.

G. Recommendations to the Security Council

69. In the light of the discussions between the members of the Security Council mission and its interlocutors and conclusions drawn from the various exchanges, the Council mission hereby recommends:

(a) That the Security Council continue to support the full implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement and the role of the Facilitator;

(b) That the Security Council, taking full account of the advice of the Facilitator, follow up on the recent recommendations of the Secretary-General on the mandate of UNOCI and the United Nations support for the Ouagadougou Agreement process;

(c) That the Secretary-General appoint a new Special Representative and head of UNOCI expeditiously. The mission also wishes to express its acknowledgements to Abou Moussa for his activity and dedication as acting Special Representative;

(d) That the Security Council carefully examine the request for a partial lifting of the arms embargo regime — and that the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004), should it be seized with a request for exemption, carefully examine such a request — in order to contribute to the peace process, taking into account the peaceful implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement.

IV. Democratic Republic of the Congo

A. Background and context

70. Prior to visiting Kinshasa on 20 June, the mission discussed the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with African Union officials in Addis Ababa. During the discussions, the mission noted the tremendous ongoing effort of the international community to help the Democratic Republic of the Congo achieve sustainable peace and reconciliation. It intended to commend the Congolese people for the conduct of successful elections and for establishing new governing institutions. It would call on the Government and the opposition to work responsibly together, in accordance with the Constitution. The mission noted that United Nations and African Union support was required to consolidate national reconciliation, and that the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) would continue to support national efforts to stabilize the east of the country.

71. The mission said that reform of the Congolese security sector, the establishment of integrated brigades and the completion of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of Congolese militias and disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of the ex-FAR/Interahamwe were critical. With regard to security sector reform, immediate priorities included strengthening command and control, training, enhancing national capacity and responsibility for administration and the effective payment of soldiers.

72. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission cautioned that the progress achieved by the Democratic Republic of the Congo was fragile and would require continued political monitoring, and that the African Union was ready to play an increased role in this regard. The African Union Peace and Security Council noted that the events of March 2007 illustrated the need for continuing international support to the consolidation of peace and democracy, the rule of law, and post-conflict reconstruction and development. It therefore urged the United Nations and

partners to demonstrate vigilance and cohesion in support of the peace process. In that regard, it highlighted the need for a continued MONUC presence.

73. The Peace and Security Council also expressed concern about the presence of foreign armed groups such as the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR) and the Lord's Resistance Army in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and appealed for the capacity of MONUC to address this threat in the region to be enhanced. The mission emphasized that MONUC had a strong mandate to support the Congolese Army in dealing with threats in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and that therefore the integration of the Army was of crucial importance in this regard. Ultimately, however, the security situation could be addressed only by taking into account its political and regional dimensions.

74. In Accra, President John A. Kufuor commended the United Nations Security Council for its support for the peace and stabilization process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and stressed that the Government should continue efforts for reconciliation and restoration of the authority of the State throughout the territory in the post-transition period. Where peace processes and post-conflict situations are still being consolidated, the Security Council should make an effort to ensure the effectiveness of both African Union and United Nations engagement, and to help maintain sustained international support for peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction.

75. In Kinshasa, the mission, led by the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sablière, met with the President, Joseph Kabila, and separately with the acting Prime Minister and State Minister for Agriculture, Nzanga Mobutu, and several Government Ministers, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mbusa Nyamwisi, the Minister of the Interior, Denis Kalume, the Minister of Defence, Chikez Diemu, and the Minister of Planning, Olivier Kamitatu. The mission also met with the President of the Senate, Léon Kengo Wa Dondo, and Senate political groups, as well as with the President of the National Assembly, Vital Kamerhe, and the Assembly's Conference of Presidents, including members of the parliamentary opposition.

76. The mission members also participated in separate thematic meetings concerning the situation in North and South Kivu Provinces and security sector reform. Several officials of North and South Kivu, including the Provincial Governors and the Presidents of the Provincial Assemblies, as well as representatives of local civil society, participated in the meeting. The Ministers of Defence and the Interior and the Inspector General of the Congolese National Police, General John Numbi, participated in the meeting on security sector reform, together with members of the international community based in Kinshasa.

77. The mission was briefed by the senior leadership of MONUC, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, William Lacy Swing.

B. Details

78. The eighth visit by a Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo took place in a political context marked by the successful conduct of national elections in 2006, the first democratic, national elections held in 40 years,

and the inauguration on 6 December 2006 of President Joseph Kabila. A former presidential candidate, Antoine Gizenga, was appointed as Prime Minister on 30 December 2006 and a coalition Government was appointed on 5 February. The Prime Minister presented the programme of his Government to the National Assembly on 22 February.

79. The period immediately following the establishment of the newly elected institutions, including the National Assembly and Senate, was marked by violent clashes between Government security forces and political opposition groups in Bas-Congo in February, and subsequently between security forces and armed members of Senator Jean-Pierre Bemba's guard in Kinshasa.

80. At the same time, the security situation in North and South Kivu Provinces in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo have deteriorated sharply, as a result of a Government-negotiated solution to a military impasse following its unsuccessful attempt to neutralize the forces of the renegade commander, Laurent Nkunda. The Government solution, which allowed for the nominal integration or *mixage* of the insurgent troops with units of the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC), has resulted in increasing the military influence of Nkunda in the region. The newly established mixed units subsequently launched offensive operations against FDLR with disastrous humanitarian consequences, including the displacement of more than 100,000 persons. The operations have also provoked a sharp increase in ethnic tensions and human rights violations in the region.

81. The Kinshasa violence and subsequent developments in the Kivus have highlighted the urgent need for progress concerning security sector reform, including the completion of the military integration process of all forces and the nationwide implementation of a comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reinsertion programme, as well as the reform of the Congolese National Police with a view to ensuring the gradual handover of national, internal security functions from the military to the police.

82. Meanwhile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo continues to face many socio-economic challenges, including a grave humanitarian crisis and the need for the Government to meet legitimate public expectations for the delivery of peace dividends. Progress in addressing these issues would also depend on the implementation of governance reforms, including the Governance Contract, and the holding of local elections.

C. Consolidation of democratic reforms

83. The mission congratulated the Congolese people and authorities on the successful completion of the electoral process and noted that the country had regained its sovereignty after many years of conflict. It was noted, however, that many challenges remained, including the consolidation of democratic reforms and the opening of political space for the development of a legitimate, constructive and peaceful opposition. The mission encouraged President Kabila to personally engage with opposition members in order to build confidence in the political process and avert violent incidents. The President said that his relationship with the opposition was "good" and added that he was open to further dialogue with the opposition, as it was important to create a "political climate conducive to nation-building". He,

however, emphasized that opposition parties conversely had an obligation to abide by the rule of law.

84. The mission noted the vital role that the National Assembly and Senate had been playing in defusing political tensions and building confidence between members of the opposition and the ruling Alliance pour la majorité presidentielle (AMP) coalition. In this regard, members of the parliamentary opposition recognized that the political climate had improved in recent weeks. It was acknowledged that "a new wind of democracy" had spread in the parliamentary institutions. Some concerns, however, remained, including the need to find a political solution concerning the future of Senator Bemba. The mission was informed that the Senate had extended Senator Bemba's authorization to remain outside of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for medical reasons until the end of July. The President of the Senate stressed the need for a political rather than a judicial solution to be found concerning Bemba's future.

85. Members of the opposition also pleaded for a direct dialogue between the opposition and the President, which they felt was essential in restoring confidence between opposition parties and AMP. The Government also needed to fully respect the human rights of opposition members and their supporters.

86. The mission stressed the importance of continued support and capacity-building for the National Assembly and Senate. The President of the National Assembly highlighted the Parliament's commitment to implementing democratic and governance reforms. He noted that opposition parties presided over two of the National Assembly's important commissions, including the Political and Legal Commission. On 14 June, the National Assembly had adopted a Law on the Status of the Opposition. Furthermore, the National Assembly was committed to exercising its oversight functions regarding the Government. It was noted that Parliamentarians had closely examined the Government programme and budget and would address the issue of decentralization, including the adoption of a Law on Decentralization, during the current parliamentary session. The Parliament had also launched investigations into the Bas-Congo and Kinshasa violence and had elaborated proposals concerning a way forward to improve the situation in the Kivus.

87. With regard to the holding of local elections, the mission noted that the Government had taken some initial steps in preparing a road map and indicative budget for their conduct. The Government expected to hold the local elections, with United Nations and donor assistance, by September 2008.

D. The situation in the Kivus

88. All of the mission's interlocutors expressed their grave concern at the recent deterioration in the political and security situation in the Kivus. President Kabila noted that the crisis was political, military and also criminal. The Government had hoped that following the elections the disarmament of all of the local armed groups would take place, as was under way in Ituri District, where the security situation had dramatically improved. In the Kivus, however, local armed groups, including the supporters of Nkunda and the Mayi-Mayi, as well as foreign armed groups, such as FDLR, continued to destabilize the region and commit atrocities against local populations.

89. President Kabila and the Government Ministers underlined their commitment to rapidly finding a solution to the situation in the Kivus. The Government was determined to facilitate, as soon as possible, a round table including representatives from different communities in the Kivus, which, it was hoped, would allow local communities to arrive at a lasting solution to the conflict in the area. Some of the mission's interlocutors among the Kivu representatives expressed reservations concerning the proposed round table. In their view the situation in the Kivus could be resolved only with the cooperation of neighbouring countries. Meanwhile, the Senate felt that the holding of an inter-institutional meeting, including the Government and its military leadership and Senate and National Assembly members, would be useful in ensuring a concerted and unified Government approach regarding the situation in the Kivus.

90. According to President Kabila — and this view was echoed at other levels of the Government — political and diplomatic efforts would be required to address the issue of the approximately 6,000 FDLR elements that remained in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, many of whom had established close ties with local communities in the area. President Kabila added, however, that a military solution to addressing the issue of the armed groups in the Kivus, including local armed groups, should not be ruled out, as those groups continued to commit human rights violations against local populations, including acts of sexual violence. At the same time, Rwanda should be encouraged to take additional steps to establish conditions conducive to the return of FDLR elements. The same view was expressed by the President of the Senate during the meeting of the mission in the Senate. The President also recognized that elements of FARDC continued to violate human rights and pledged to continue taking measures aimed at ending impunity in that regard, at every level of the hierarchy.

91. The mission urged its interlocutors to rapidly adopt a clear strategy focusing on political and diplomatic means to put an end to the conflict in the Kivus and address the long-standing root causes of the conflict, including inter-ethnic tensions, land, security and economic grievances and the regional dimension. The mission underlined the need to give priority to a political approach and to avoid military attempts to settle the conflict. It recognized that the relations with Rwanda were a critical factor in resolving the issue and also stressed the need for the Government to adequately communicate its intentions regarding the Kivus and other policy matters to the Congolese people and the international community. The mission stated the readiness of the Security Council and MONUC to help the authorities in elaborating such a global strategy.

E. Regional relations

92. President Kabila noted that the relationship of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the nine neighbouring countries was "good". He added that the country's relationship with Rwanda had improved but further progress was needed. Several initiatives had been helpful in strengthening prospects for the normalization of the bilateral relationship with Rwanda, including the relaunching of the Communauté economique des pays des Grands Lacs and the signing of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region. The mission encouraged its interlocutors, in particular President Kabila, to make additional efforts towards the normalization of the bilateral relationship with Rwanda,

including through an exchange of Ambassadors. The Democratic Republic of the Congo has already opened an office in Uganda.

93. The President agreed in principle on the need for the normalization of the bilateral relationship between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. A number of critical issues would, however, need to be addressed before the two countries could exchange Ambassadors, including finding a solution to the Nkunda and FDLR problems. In the meantime, the Democratic Republic of the Congo would organize the next summit of the Great Lakes Conference in Kinshasa and President Kabila looked forward to receiving President Kagame and President Museveni in the country on that occasion.

F. Security sector reform

94. The Government stressed the importance of national ownership of the security sector reform process. The Government had established a strategy regarding a future Congolese Army. In the light of its current financial and operational constraints, including the lack of training of a large number of soldiers, the Government had decided to prioritize the training of two or three well-trained and equipped elite brigades, which would focus on addressing the country's security concerns. The remainder of the armed forces would be constituted into a "development army" that would participate in the reconstruction of the country, including major infrastructure rehabilitation and agricultural projects. The Government's plan, including an assessment of specific needs, would be shared with donors in September for their support. The Minister of Defence also noted that improving civil-military relations was a key priority.

95. In the meantime, the Government would organize in July a round table, including its international partners, aimed at establishing a critical path towards the completion of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and army integration processes, including the reform of the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. The mission clearly stressed that priority should be given to the issue of army integration. The mission noted that more progress had been achieved in the police reform process, which had now to be consolidated. The Government and its international partners had finalized a comprehensive package for long-term police reform, including a reform plan and a draft legal framework. It is expected that the reform plan and draft laws on police reform would be adopted shortly by the Government and subsequently by the National Assembly.

96. The Government also sought clarification regarding the provisions of the arms embargo established by Security Council resolution 1533 (2004). The mission explained that the embargo regime did not apply to integrated FARDC or to integrated Congolese police units. It also took note of the Government's efforts to strengthen the justice system.

G. Socio-economic situation

97. The mission expressed concern at the socio-economic situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including the slow delivery of peace dividends for the population following the elections. The President and Government noted that

the Government had established a budget, which in their view would allow the Government to address only the priority tasks outlined in its programme. The lack of resources and the heavy debt-servicing requirements prevented the Government from implementing a more ambitious socio-economic programme. The Government was, however, taking steps to improve macroeconomic indicators and create a climate conducive to private investment, including tackling corruption, reviewing mining contracts and establishing legal frameworks for the exploitation of natural resources.

H. Support of the international community

98. The mission sought the views of the Congolese leadership on how best the international community could continue providing support to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the new post-electoral context, including through an arrangement for regular consultations promoting a political dialogue. It was noted that a new form of partnership was required, based on the respect of the international community for the country's "recaptured" sovereignty. The international community should remain mindful of and respect and promote Congolese ownership in charting the country's path towards recovery and political stability. The President said that he was receptive to holding a continued dialogue with the international community, which should be conducted directly with the relevant Congolese institutions. Whether this dialogue should take place in a structured way or in a formal way was a technical issue that could be settled easily. It was important not to return to the formula of the International Committee in Support of the Transition. It was also important for MONUC to adapt its approach and posture to the new reality. The President hoped that the focus of the international community on other crises in Africa and elsewhere in the world would not erode support for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He added that the Democratic Republic of the Congo "needs the support of the international community", including a continued United Nations peacekeeping presence for at least another 24 months.

I. Recommendations to the Security Council

99. While reaffirming the relevance of the elements contained in its terms of reference, the mission recommends the following:

(a) That the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo seeks a solution to the crisis in the Kivus through political and diplomatic means. The mission also stresses that the *mixage* experiment in North Kivu should be terminated and replaced with a real *brassage*, consistent with the principles of the integration of FARDC;

(b) That the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda continue to strive to improve their diplomatic relations;

(c) That the Congolese authorities carry out the reform of the security sector as a matter of priority, with a view to consolidating the achievements of the reform of the police, completing the integration of all Army units, while completing also the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process;

(d) That the international partners of the Democratic Republic of the Congo organize and coordinate their support for security sector reform so as to maximize its efficiency;

(e) That the Congolese authorities and their main international partners organize themselves so as to make possible a continuing political dialogue.

V. Conclusion

100. The members of the Security Council mission to Africa wish to acknowledge their appreciation for the opportunity to exchange views with their African partners on a variety of issues that come before the Security Council. They found the discussions to be very constructive and useful. Finally, on behalf of the Security Council, Ambassadors Kumalo, Jones Parry, Voto-Bernales and de La Sablière, in their respective capacity as leaders of segments of the mission, would like to collectively place on record their gratitude to their various host Governments and other interlocutors for their hospitality, support and time. They would also like to pay tribute to their Council colleagues for their proactive participation and for contributing to the successful outcome of the mission. Finally, they wish to express their appreciation to the Secretariat for all its support.

Annex I

Composition and terms of reference of the mission

Composition of the mission

Ambassador Olivier Belle (Belgium)

Ambassador Wang Guangya (China)

Mr. Lazare Makayat-Safouesse (Congo)

Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sablière (France)

Ambassador Leslie Christian (Ghana)

Mr. Rachmat Budiman (Indonesia)

Ambassador Aldo Mantovani (Italy)

Ambassador Alfredo Suescum (Panama)

Ambassador Jorge Voto-Bernales (Peru)

Mr. Tariq Ali Faraj H. Al-Ansari (Qatar)

Ambassador Konstantin Dolgov (Russian Federation)

Ambassador Peter Burian (Slovakia)

Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo (South Africa)

Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom)[a]

Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad (United States)[b]

Terms of reference

Mission to Addis Ababa and Accra

Led by Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom) and Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo (South Africa)

1. Exchange of views on how best to maximize the relationship between the United Nations Security Council and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, including in respect of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

2. Discuss mechanisms for elaborating closer ties in the fields of conflict prevention, mediation and good offices, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction, including peacebuilding, and identify areas where particular focus is needed to make further progress.

[a] Addis Ababa, Khartoum and Accra only. Mr. Michael Hoare will represent the United Kingdom on the Abidjan and Kinshasa legs of the mission.

[b] Addis Ababa, Khartoum and Accra only. Mr. William Brencick will represent the United States on the Abidjan and Kinshasa legs of the mission.

3. Discuss ways and means of supporting and improving in a sustained way the resource base and capacity of the peace and security architecture of the African Union.

4. Exchange of views on wider African situations of interest to both the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council, welcoming enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union on issues including, but not limited to:

- The Sudan: facilitation of the implementation of the phased approach to peacekeeping, including the deployment of the African Union/United Nations hybrid operation
- Somalia: national reconciliation process; the African Union Mission to Somalia — progress and challenges; future role of the United Nations
- Chad/Central African Republic: prospects for deployment of a United Nations mission
- Côte d'Ivoire: political transition, including elections
- Democratic Republic of the Congo: post-election progress and challenges
- Ethiopia-Eritrea: implementation of the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission
- Great Lakes (Lord's Resistance Army): the threat from the Lord's Resistance Army and ongoing efforts to resolve this problem.

5. Commend the efforts of the African Union to achieve lasting peace in Africa, and consider how best to develop closer relations between the United Nations and the African Union, in line with the 10-year plan for capacity-building with the African Union.

Mission to the Sudan

Led by Ambassador Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom) and Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo (South Africa)

1. To reaffirm the Security Council's commitment to the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Sudan and the international community's determination to help the Sudan achieve a peaceful and prosperous development, and to review the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

2. To encourage the Government of the Sudan and the non-signatory parties to engage constructively in the Darfur peace process with a view to finding lasting peace in the Sudan, in particular support for the forthcoming talks to be convened by the United Nations and African Union special envoys on Darfur.

3. To encourage the efforts of the African Union, the United Nations in consultation with the Government of the Sudan to achieve without delay full agreement on and full implementation of the Addis Ababa Outcome that provided for a re-energized political process, a strengthened ceasefire and a three-phase approach to peacekeeping: the light support package (phase I), the heavy support package (phase II) and the hybrid operation (phase III).

4. To encourage all parties to fully implement the ceasefire agreement.

5. To underline the need for full implementation by all parties of international obligations, in the political, security and humanitarian fields.

Mission to Côte d'Ivoire

Led by Ambassador Jorge Voto-Bernales (Peru)

1. To welcome the ownership of the peace process by the Ivorian parties in the framework of the Ouagadougou Agreement.

2. To encourage the parties to implement fully and in good faith all the provisions of the Agreement and of the subsequent agreements, and to express the readiness of the Council to help them in this regard.

3. To welcome the fact that Ivorian parties as well as the Facilitator stressed that continued United Nations assistance was essential to the peace process. To determine with Ivorian parties, and in liaison with the Facilitation, the role of the United Nations in the follow-up of the peace process. To underline the importance of meeting the agreed timelines.

4. To stress the importance of a lasting and final settlement of the crisis, and therefore, of the credibility of all the process. To reaffirm, in particular, the commitment of the Security Council to the credibility of the elections, that shall be guaranteed by the certification of key steps of the electoral process. To recall the necessity to implement in a credible manner the operations of disarmament of ex-combatants and militia, of identification of the population and registration of voters, as set out in the Ouagadougou Agreement.

5. To call upon the parties to ensure an environment favourable to the holding of free, open, fair and transparent elections, in particular by guaranteeing that the media remain neutral.

6. To point out that the Council will examine the sanctions regime in order to contribute to the peace process, taking into account the peaceful implementation of the Ouagadougou Agreement.

7. To encourage the Ivorian parties, in implementing the Ouagadougou Agreement, to ensure the protection of vulnerable civilians, in particular children, women, internally displaced persons and other groups affected by the crisis.

Mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Led by Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sablière (France)

1. To reaffirm the commitment of the Security Council to help the Congolese authorities to consolidate peace, democratic governance and the rule of law in the post-transitional period in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. To stress that the new mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) set out by resolution 1756 (2007) constitutes a significant contribution by the United Nations to this endeavour.

2. To welcome the adoption of the programme of the Government, in particular the governance contract included therein, and to emphasize the need for the Government to rapidly implement the contract and to deliver peace dividends to the Congolese population.

3. To urge all political parties to remain committed to the political process and national reconciliation in accordance with the constitutional framework and the law. To call on the democratically elected authorities to respect the space and role conferred on the opposition parties by the Constitution in order to ensure their effective participation in the national political debate.

4. To stress the importance of developing as a matter of urgency a national security strategy and planning and carrying out the security sector reform in order to establish professional security organizations in the areas of defence, police and the administration of justice that are well managed, protect civilians and act in accordance with the Constitution and with respect for the rule of law, human rights and international humanitarian law. To stress also the importance of disarming, demobilizing, resettling or repatriating, as appropriate, and reintegrating Congolese and foreign combatants. To explore the next steps to be taken by the Congolese authorities and their international partners in this regard.

5. To discuss with the Congolese authorities the ways and means of defusing current tensions and engaging in a plan for the long-term stabilization of the eastern part of the country, particularly in the Kivu and Ituri regions. To call on the Congolese authorities to step up their efforts to put an end to impunity and to ensure effective protection of the population throughout the territory.

6. To express the Council's concern at the persistence of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, in particular those carried out by Congolese militias and foreign armed groups but also by elements of the Congolese security forces.

7. To encourage the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to establish with its principal international partners an effective arrangement for regular consultations promoting a political dialogue.

8. To welcome the signing in Nairobi on 15 December 2006 of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, and to encourage the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to continue to work with its neighbours to resolve in a constructive manner the shared security and border problems of countries in the region. To encourage the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to ratify the Stability Pact and to fully resume diplomatic relations with all neighbours.

Annex II

Joint communiqué agreed by the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council

1. Recalling that the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security;

2. Recalling the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations on the relationship with regional arrangements;

3. Recalling the mandate of the African Union Peace and Security Council with regard to the maintenance of peace and security in Africa, as provided for in the relevant provisions of the Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union;

4. Recalling the presidential statements and decisions of the Security Council and Peace and Security Council on the relationship between the two bodies;

5. Recognizing the contribution made by the African Union, the regional economic communities and the United Nations in promoting peace in Africa;

6. Underlining the importance of support for the operationalization of the African peace and security architecture and in this context encouraging the implementation of the 10-year programme for capacity-building between the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission;

7. At our joint meeting here today, we commit ourselves to the development of a stronger and more structured relationship between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council, inter alia, on conflict prevention, management and resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, including post-conflict reconstruction and development, as well as sharing of information on conflict situations on the agendas of the two bodies.

8. We express our support for the strengthening of African Union capacity within the Commission in all relevant areas, such as planning and logistics, and in particular the establishment of a well-resourced peacekeeping capability, as well as in the fields of conflict prevention, management and resolution.

9. We attach particular importance to the development of the African standby force.

10. We agree to consider, including on the basis of the forthcoming report from the Secretary-General, the modalities for supporting and improving in a sustained way the resource base and capacity of the African Union. In doing so, we will bear in mind that in taking initiatives for the promotion of peace and security in Africa in terms of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, the African Union is also acting on behalf of the international community, and we will examine the possibility of the financing of a peacekeeping operation undertaken by the African Union or under its authority, as requested in the decision of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government (Assembly/AU/Dec. 145 (VIII)).

11. We agree to strengthen the relationship between all the relevant structures of the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council, including their subsidiary bodies.

12. We agree to hold joint meetings between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council, at least once a year, either in Addis Ababa or New York.

13. We express support for closer cooperation between the United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission, particularly on conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

14. We encourage the sharing of experiences on working methods between the two bodies.

15. We encourage close consultations between the African Union and the Security Council as decisions are being prepared on issues affecting peace and security in Africa.

16. To further our relationship, we will consider how best to improve the effectiveness of African Union and United Nations peace efforts in Africa and how to strengthen coordination between the African Union and the United Nations. We look forward to further joint consideration at our next meeting.